

GREENWorks

Ideas for a Cleaner Environment

A publication of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, Concord, NH (603) 271-3710

July 2014

Keeping Your Garden Green All Summer Long

July is an important month for gardens. This is when all the early season work and care for your garden finally starts to pay off and you can enjoy the variety of delicious veggies. The work, however, is not over. To keep your garden thriving, try some of these green gardening tips that are not only good for your garden but good for the environment as well.

1. Going All Natural

Do your garden and your wallet a favor by leaving unnecessary chemicals out of your garden. Chemical remedies to kill weeds and pests can help to keep your garden green but have you looked for organic methods of integrated pest management? The internet is full of clever ideas for dealing with all sorts of gardening dilemmas. By taking some extra time to educate yourself about organic methods, you will be helping to keep chemicals out the environment and out of the vegetables that you plan to eat.

2. Compost, Compost, Compost

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the average American generates close to 1,600 pounds of trash per year. By placing all your kitchen wastes, except for meat, bones, dairy products and fatty foods, into a backyard compost pile, you can dramatically reduce that amount. Not only are you reducing the amount of trash you produce, over time you will create nutrient rich soil that can be used in your garden, flower beds or yard. Compost takes time to develop so be sure to turn your compost pile with a shovel or to rotate your compost piles by contributing waste to this year's pile while using last year's pile as an additive to your soil.

3. Harvest Rainwater

Lawn and garden watering make up nearly 40 percent of total household water use during the summer. Most gardeners hope for periodic rain showers to help minimize the amount of watering we have to do from the tap. One way to make the rain last is to capture it using a rain barrel. You can use the water in the rain barrel at a later time to water your garden, flowers or your lawn, potentially saving hundreds of gallons of water a year. Rain barrels also help to minimize stormwater runoff, which can cause flooding or erosion. For more information on how to build your own rain barrel, visit:

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/stormwater/documents/rain-barrel-fs.pdf>

4. Invite Our Pollinator Friends

Ever wonder why certain crops flowered but never produced any fruit or vegetables. Perhaps your garden has a shortage of bees? Buzzing bees are music to a gardener's ears. Encourage bees, butterflies and other pollinating animals and insects by planting flowers or flowering herbs near or around your garden. Remember to keep your garden chemical free to protect the bees so that they can do their job and in the process help your garden to flourish

Remembering these green gardening tips can help with a healthier garden and a healthy environment.

#